Issues that are affecting our market access that can bring about a further rise in our exports are being taken up from time to time with the concerned US authorities. They were also taken up at the recently held Indo-US Trade Policy Forum Meeting in New Delhi on November 12, 2005 which was co-chaired by the US Trade Representative Robert Portman and Shri Kamal Nath, Minister, Commerce & Industry.

Investments from Japanese Companies

753. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has recently invited investments from Japanese companies; and

(b) if so, the areas in which the investment have sought and the reaction of the Japanese companies in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) The Government of India, in association with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry and Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, organized "Doordarshan India" seminar in Tokyo, Japan on April 13, 2005. The Seminar focused on investment opportunities in various sectors and aimed at creating awareness on the investment climate in India.

Another seminar on Investment Opportunities in Madhya Pradesh was organized by the Government of Madhya Pradesh in association with the Government of India on September 19, 2005 with the objective of disseminating information on investment opportunities for Japanese companies in various sectors in the state of Madhya Pradesh.

Rejection of Export consignments

754. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that India again tops the list of rejection of food and drug export consignments;

(b) whether it is a fact that the US rejected as many as 256 food export consignments in August 2005 on grounds of sanitary, phytosanitary (SPS) and technical parameters;

(c) whether it is a fact, there are cases of rejection of products from developed countries like Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, New Zealand and UK also; and

(d) if so, whether Government has made any investigations in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir, the United States Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) has reported refusal of 256 consignments in August, on its website.

(c) Instances of rejections and destruction of couple of rejected Indian consignments of agricultural and marine products by some of the EU Member States on account of Sanitary & Phytosanitary (SPS) and technical parameters have been noticed during the last two and half years.

The Department of AYUSH has informed that Canada banned Indian Ayurvedic drugs due to reportedly high levels of heavy metals in these Ayurvedic drugs, without providing the details of the test results and the methods adopted to determine the same. As per the WTO-Agreement on the Application of Sanitary & Phytosanitary measures (SPS) and the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), Members of the WTO are allowed to take or adopt any measures including embargo on imports for protection of life or health of human beings, animals and plants, provided such measures are based on evidence of science, are not having discriminatory in content, and are not trade restrictive.

(d) The Canadian ban on import of Indian Ayurvedic drugs appears to have violated the aforesaid principles of science and non-discrimination and has also caused undue trade disruption. The matter was taken up with Canada in the last meeting of the Joint Commission held in India in September, 2005.

In order to address quality issues in food products exports, Government has laid down standards and residue monitoring plans for various processed food items. Government is also providing assistance for establishment/ modernization/technology upgradation of food processing units, setting up of testing/inspection facilities, support for research & development, including quality assurance and accreditation under quality certification system, creation of infrastructure, development of human resource, etc.

Imposition of Dumping Duty on Shrimps by US

755. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state: